

National football league draft busts



NFL

Drafts are always an exciting time. So many predictions, so much expert analysis, so much time, money, and energy all spent on one goal: To decide which players will have success in the NFL. An enormous amount of hard work goes into drafting a single player. Teams spend countless hours, days, months, and even years trying to figure out which prospects have the greatest potential to find success. The NFL Draft consists of 7 rounds of all the rounds the first round is the most hyped and anticipated and understandably so as some of the best college players are drafted in this round. When drafted in the first round the future prospect has to live up to the enormous expectations that come with being drafted in the first round. Some go on to find success in the NFL and fulfill their duty as a first-round pick, however, there are many circumstances in which first-round picks fail to live up to the expectations. In that scenario, they are considered a “Bust”. Although first-round picks have enormous pressure to perform well they are also very handsomely paid.

In 2008, the average guaranteed salary for a first-round pick in the NFL was \$11, 924, 000. For second-round picks, that number drops to \$1, 932, 000, while third-round picks averaged \$668, 000 guaranteed. The steep drop illustrates the significant financial importance a higher draft slot has for a prospect. So it's easy to see why there is so much pressure on first-round picks. However, the first round is not the only round of the draft there are six more rounds behind it. Teams can defiantly find talent in all rounds of the Draft. Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Montana was drafted in the third round, 3-time MVP Brett Favre was drafted in the 2nd round, and 3-time Super Bowl <https://assignbuster.com/national-football-league-draft-busts-research-paper-samples/>

winner and future Hall of Famer Tom Brady was drafted in the 6th round with the 199th overall pick. Even with all the great NFL Draft picks there are some really horrible and frankly stupid draft decisions. For every Tom Brady, there is a JaMarcus Russell. With that being said we now break down the Top 10 worst draft picks in NFL history. Picks that cost their teams millions and the chance to draft future NFL stars and Hall of Famers.

1. The Colts traded to draft George, making him the first pick in the 1990 draft and then rewarded him with the richest rookie contract in NFL history. What should have been a dream career with his hometown Colts turned ugly almost from the start? By the time it ended after four seasons with a trade to the Atlanta Falcons, he had made vile gestures to the hometown fans, argued with Coach Ted Marchibroda, held out for 36 days, and tried to get a trade. George would turn out to be a journeyman quarterback being on seven different teams. He had a passer rating of 80.4 and threw for 27,602 yards with 154 touchdowns and 113 interceptions.
2. Blair Thomas, RB, Penn State (1990 / Round: 1 / Pick: 2). Thomas was drafted by the New York Jets in the first round (second overall) of the 1990 NFL Draft. His NFL playing career ended six seasons. Despite leading NFL rookies in yards-per-carry and AFC rookies in total yardage, he is widely considered another in a long line of Jets draft disappointments. Thomas rushed for only 2,000 yards and five touchdowns in his four seasons with the Jets. Thomas suffered a series of nagging injuries beginning in 1992 and was released by the Jets following the 1993 season. He began the 1994 season with the New

England Patriots but finished it with the Dallas Cowboys. He concluded his NFL career with the Carolina Panthers in 1995.

3. Akili Smith, QB, Oregon (1999 / Round: 1 / Pick: 3). Taken by the Cincinnati Bengals with the No. 3 overall pick in the 1999 draft, Smith never grasped the complexities of the NFL game and failed to show the work ethic required to succeed in the league. He started just 17 games over four years with the Bengals, throwing just five touchdowns. He had two failed comebacks with the Packers and Buccaneers before an uneventful, short stint in the CFL. As for life after football, in March 2010 Smith became a graduate football assistant at Cal. He was hired by head coach Jeff Tedford, who previously coached Smith at Oregon as offensive coordinator.

4. Lawrence Phillips, RB, Nebraska (1996 / Round: 1 / Pick: 6). Phillips was drafted sixth overall in the 1996 NFL Draft by the St. Louis Rams despite his considerable character issues; several teams with higher picks declared they passed on him because of his off-the-field troubles. Phillips played the 1996 and part of the 1997 seasons with the Rams before refusing to show for a team meeting and practice in a dispute with coach Dick Vermeil over playing time in November 1997. The Rams cut Phillips in 1997.. Phillips is arguably one of the biggest draft-day blunders in NFL history, the Rams thought so highly of him that the team traded his predecessor, Jerome Bettis, to the Pittsburgh Steelers immediately after drafting Phillips, a trade that would later prove beneficial to the Steelers. After the Rams, he played two games with the Miami Dolphins before being cut. He later played for the 49ers,

CFL, AFL, and NFL Europe. His lone career highlight is an infamous one
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as he missed a crucial block on all-pro cornerback Aeneas Williams who proceeded to knock out Steve Young during a Monday Night Football game against the Arizona Cardinals. This injury would lead to the end of Young's career. Phillips had one run-in with the law after another after his playing career was over, none worse than the one that sent him to prison last December for attacking his girlfriend and driving his car into three teens. He is currently serving a 31-year prison sentence.

5. Charles Rogers, WR, Michigan State (2003 / Round: 1 / Pick: 2). The No. 2 overall pick in 2003 by Detroit lasted just three seasons in the NFL and caught just 36 passes in his 14-game career. Poor attitude, injuries, and a drug habit contributed to his failures as an NFL player. After getting cut by the Lions in 2005, the same year the NFL suspended him for substance abuse, he had tryouts with the Dolphins, Patriots, and Buccaneers in 2006, but was not signed. His career was finished. After his career was over Rodgers did not face much better off the field. He was arrested in September 2008 and charged with assault and battery of a female acquaintance. In December 2008, Rogers was sentenced to attend sobriety court or face jail time after violating his probation after testing positive for Vicodin. In March 2009, Rogers was jailed for violating probation. On September 16, 2009, Rogers was arrested in Novi, MI for driving under the influence of alcohol after being found unresponsive behind the wheel of his car by police. Rogers was arrested again in Novi, MI on January 5, 2010, having passed out after drinking at an On the Border restaurant, which was a violation of a sobriety court order, and subsequently sentenced to a 93-day jail term. And last month, Rogers was ordered to return \$6. 1 million of his

\$9.1 million signing bonus to the Lions because his drug use violated the terms of his NFL contract.

6. Heath Shuler, QB, Tennessee (1994 / Round: 1 / Pick: 3). Shuler was a first-round selection in the 1994 NFL Draft, taken by the Washington Redskins with the third overall pick. ESPN rated him the 4th biggest NFL Draft bust of all time. [3] He held out of training camp until he received a 7-year, \$19.25 million contract. The Redskins had fallen on hard times since winning Super Bowl XXVI, and Shuler was looked on as the quarterback of the future. However, Shuler's poor play contributed to a quarterback controversy with fellow 1994 draft pick Gus Frerotte. This was showcased when Shuler threw five interceptions in a game against the Arizona Cardinals. Shuler started only 18 games in his first two years with the team and was benched in his third year, as Frerotte went to the Pro Bowl. He was out of the NFL by 1997. As a pro, his career passer rating was a horrible 54.3 and in 2004 ESPN rated him the 17th biggest 'sports flop' of the past 25 years. Despite his NFL career is a disaster unlike most of the previous top draft busts Shuler actually did something with his life. After retiring from the NFL, Shuler returned to the University of Tennessee and completed his education, graduating with a degree in psychology. He then became a real estate professional in Knoxville. His real estate company is one of the largest independent firms in East Tennessee. Shuler is a Democratic member of the United States House of Representatives, representing North Carolina's 11th congressional district since 2007.

7. Tony Mandarich, OT, Michigan State (1989 / Round: 1 / Pick: 2). He was the first-round draft pick of the Green Bay Packers in 1989, second

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overall behind Hall of Fame quarterback Troy Aikman, and ahead of the third selection, Hall of Fame running back Barry Sanders, the fourth selection, Hall of Fame linebacker Derrick Thomas, and the fifth selection, perennial All-Pro cornerback Deion Sanders. In 1989, Sports Illustrated called him "The Best Offensive line prospect ever". But his career led into what is considered by many to be one of the biggest busts in NFL history. The "Incredible Bulk" came into the league as one of the most hyped players in NFL draft history. Both scouts and media began hailing Mandarich as the best offensive line prospect ever, touting his "measurables", "He weighed 304, ran the 40 in 4.65 seconds, did a standing long jump of 10'3", leaped vertically 30" and bench-pressed 225 pounds an unbelievable 39 times". The No. overall pick of the Packers in 1989 never lived up to the incredible hype, and after just three disappointing seasons in Green Bay, he was cut. In an ironic twist, Sports Illustrated featured Mandarich on its cover s again, however, this time labeling him "The NFL's Incredible Bust" quite a stark contrast from the previous slogan of The "Incredible Bulk". Mandarich later admitted to using steroids all throughout his college career at Michigan State yet he insisted that he played his NFL career clean.

8. Tim Couch, QB, Kentucky (1999 / Round: 1 / Pick: 1). The top overall pick in the 1999 draft was supposed to be the franchise quarterback for the newly re-coined Cleveland Browns. Drafted before Donovan McNabb there were high expectations for him in Cleveland. Their GM boldly predicted that Couch would win six playoff games. Although

Couch did lead the Browns to the playoffs most of his time in Cleveland
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was marred with boos, inconsistent play, and injuries. The coach was plagued by nagging injuries and an inexperienced offensive line; also he just simply didn't have the makings of an NFL quarterback. After getting cut by the Browns in 2004, he had two failed comebacks and also had a 2-year stint in the CFL.

9. Ryan Leaf, QB, Washington State (1998 / Round: 1 / Pick: 2). Ryan Leaf at number 2 on the all-time bust list? Is this a joke? No there is somebody who we believe is worse than Leaf but don't get me wrong Leaf was one of the biggest busts not in just the NFL but in professional sports history. There were actually scouts out there who thought Leaf would make a better pro than Peyton Manning. THE Peyton Manning. Although that notion seems ridiculous now there were quite a few people who believed Leaf was the better QB. Good thing for the Colts they picked Manning over Leaf, too bad the same can't be said for the San Diego Chargers. In the third game of his first season Leaf completed one of fifteen passes for 4 yards and fumbled three times in a loss against the Kansas City Chiefs. He was benched after throwing two touchdown passes and thirteen interceptions in nine games and replaced by Craig Whelihan. After ten games, Leaf had thrown two more interceptions, passing for a total of 1, 289 yards, with a 45. 3 percent completion rate and a passer rating of 39. Leaf had poor relationships with the media and his teammates. In one infamous locker room incident during Leaf's rookie year, he was caught on camera screaming at San Diego Union-Tribune reporter Jay Posner, " Just f**king don't talk to me, all right! Knock it off! " and had to be physically restrained by teammate Junior Seau. Another on-camera

incident involved Leaf confronting a heckling Chargers fan during a practice session. Two coaches had to restrain Leaf and escort him off the field. Following more poor performances and injury problems, he was released by the Chargers after the season, with four wins as a starter in three years. Unfortunately for Leaf, his life didn't improve off the field either. He has been in trouble with the law multiple times and is currently serving 10 years of probation after pleading guilty in Amarillo, Texas, to eight felony drug charges and losing his job as an assistant football coach at West Texas.

10. JaMarcus Russell, QB, LSU (2007 / Round: 1 / Pick: 1). Presenting the biggest NFL Draft bust of all time. It will truly take great skill to be worse than JaMarcus Russell. Drafted number one overall in the 2007 Draft Russell turned out to be one of the worst draftees of all time. He was hailed as the man who could finally save the hapless Oakland Raiders. He was thought to return them to greatness. He was supposed to be the Franchise. Now he's out of the franchise but not before taking \$40 million and cementing his legacy as the worst draft pick EVER! Failing to reach a contract agreement with the Raiders, Russell held out through training camp and the first weeks of the 2007 NFL season, until September 12, 2007, when he signed a six-year contract worth up to \$68 million, with \$31.5 million guaranteed. He is 7-18 as an NFL starter, which is the worst record by a quarterback who was a No. 1 overall pick. He threw for 18 touchdowns and threw 23 interceptions. He threw for 4,083 yards and had a passer rating of 65.2 He is the fastest quarterback who was a top pick to be released by his drafting team. Russell lasted three years in Oakland. Russell was often cited as <https://assignbuster.com/national-football-league-draft-busts-research-paper-samples/>

being lazy, overweight, and unintelligent. He showed up to camp weighing an astonishing 300 lbs! A ridiculously high number for an NFL quarterback. Although Russell's numbers are superior to Ryan Leaf's; Leaf only cost the chargers \$11 million, JaMarcus on the other hand cost the Raiders \$40 million. So there you have it JaMarcus Russell THE biggest Draft Bust in NFL history.